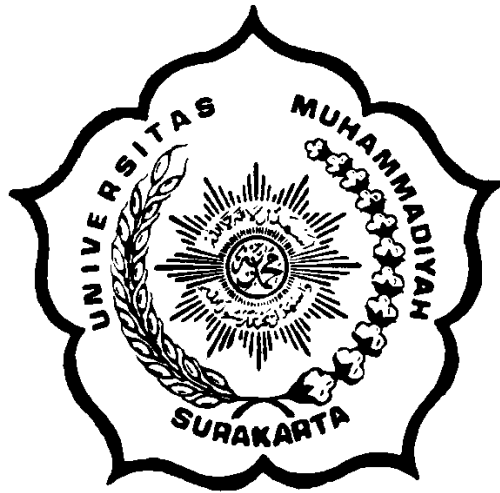


**THE IMPORTANCE OF SIMPLICITY OF LIFE IN LOUISA MAY
ALCOTT'S *LITTLE WOMEN* NOVEL (1868) :
A SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH
PUBLICATION ARTICLES**



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Surakarta, 29 Desember 2014

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Pembimbing II

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LITTLE WOMEN NOVEL (1868) : A SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH**

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ABSTRACT

RATNA TRI HANDAYANI A 320100224. THE IMPORTANCE OF SIMPLICITY OF LIFE IN LOUISA MAY ALCOTT'S LITTLE WOMEN NOVEL (1868) : A SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH. RESEARCH PAPER. MUHAMMADIYAH UNIVERSITY OF SURAKARTA.

The object of the study are to analyze the novel based on its structural elements and to analyze the novel based on Sociological Approach. This study is a qualitative study. The object of the study is Louisa May Alcott's and The Little Women novel published in 1868 in America.. The data sources are divided into two, namely primary data source and secondary data source. The primary is the novel itself and the secondary data source is other sources related to the analysis such as the author biography, books of literary theory and also sociological books. The object of this research is Louisa May Alcott's Little Women novel, and the writer is going to analyze it by using sociological approach. The method of data collection is library research. The technique of data analysis is descriptive analysis.

Based on the analysis, the writer draws the following conclusions. The elements of the novel present a good unity that consist of exposition, complication, climax, and resolution.in Little Women by Louisa May Alcott's describe about the simple is a good life. The issues also about the reality condition of America at the second half nineteenth century.

Key words: The Importance of Simplicity of life, Little Women, Sociological Approach.

A. INTRODUCTION

Little Women is a novel written by an American author, named Louisa May Alcott. Which was originally published in two volumes in 1868 and 1869. Alcott wrote the books rapidly over several months at the request of her publisher. *Little Women* is a novel about the lives of four sisters named Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy in facing their life in family without father figure. Four March sisters have different characteristics to each other. Meg, is the oldest sister, she is referred to as a beauty, she as the lecture for her younger sisters. Jo, the second sister 15 years old, is tomboyish, is a strong young woman. Beth, the third, is described as shy, gentle and musical. Amy, the youngest children and baby of the family, she is the artist of the family.

The study of *Little women* novel (1868) by Louisa May Alcott is an interesting novel. As far as the writer concerns, the research on the novel *Little Women* has been conducted by Anita Widiastuti, a Muhammadiyah University student (2003), entitled “Jo’s Struggle For Better Standard Of Living In Louisa May Alcott’s *Little Women*: An Individual Psychology Analysis”. She uses individual psychology analysis to analyze the data. The aim of the study is to find the influences of Jo’s struggle for better standard of living on her personality development.

The second researcher who is interested in this novel is Agustin Dwi Ratnaningrum, a Muhammadiyah University student (2009), in her study entitled “The Effects Of Civil War On Families In Louisa May Allcot’s *Little Women*: Sociological Approach”. She uses sociology analysis to analyze the data. The aim of the study is to find the effect of Civil War on families are reflected in Louisa May Allcot’s *Little Women* novel.

Different from the previous writer, the writer has different perspective in analyzing the data. The writer uses sociological approach to analyze the data. The writer analyzes the important simplicity of life in Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* by using sociological approach.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

While analyzing the novel, the writer uses qualitative research. There are some steps to conduct the research. The data sources are library and literary data. It's purposes is to analyze using sociological approach. The object of the study is the importance of simplicity of life to the sociological approach reflected in Louisa May Alcott and *Little Women* (1868) by using sociological approach. The writer uses two data sources, namely primary data and secondary data. The primary data source of the study is the novel *Little Women* written by Louisa May Alcott. The secondary data source are taken from other sources related the study, the author's biography, the website from the internet about this novel and other resources that support the analysis. The writer's technique of analyzing data are: reading the Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* novel repeatedly, reading the translation novel for more understanding, identifying the topic of the novel, determining the major characters and look for information on internet and article related to the object of the study. The steps analyzing the data as follows: first, analyzing the data based on its structural elements. Second, analyzing the data based on sociological analysis.

C. RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Little Women novel as a literary work reflects the social reality which is seen from social aspect, economic aspect, political aspect, science and technology aspect, cultural aspect, and religious aspect.

1. Finding

In analyzing Little Women novel, the writer gets some findings as follows:.

a. Social aspect

Social aspect consist of two aspect there are social status and social structure. Social status is about the member rich of people and the poor of people group. The social structure in America in the second half nineteenth century had changed in the United States is influenced by the industrial revolution. In social class is divided into three class, the are upper class, middle class, and lower class.

Social status consist of two members, the first is rich people and the second is poor people. The character belonging of the rich family is Laurence. They live in city with a good mansion. They have good house and in the house have some music instrument. It can be seen from the story of the novel about Laurence family's.

“Jo told her adventures, and by the time she had finished they were at home. With many thanks, they said good night and crept in, hoping to disturb no one, but the instant their door creaked, two little nightcaps bobbed up, and two sleepy but eager voices cried out...” (LW: 56)

For the poor member of people it can be seen from Hummels family. Alcott explain the Hummel's family is very poor member of society.

“They were all unusually hungry, having waited nearly an hour, and for a minute no one spoke, only a minute, for Jo exclaimed impetuously, ‘I’m so glad you came before we began!’” (LW: 24)
A poor, bare, miserable room it was, with broken windows, no fire, ragged bedclothes, a sick mother, wailing baby, and a group of pale, hungry children cuddled under one old quilt, trying to keep warm.” (LW: 25)

In *Little Women*, Alcott shows the phenomenon about the rich and the poor in America in the second half nineteenth century. Hummel's family belongs to the upper class. It can be seen from Hummel's family is very poor. They house is only have one room, and a poor woman with a little newborn baby. The income also identifies the social structure in middle class. Alcott put the March family in to middle class. Alcott also describes about the struggle of the four March sister.

Little Women novel portrays a good relationship between the poor and rich member of family. It exposes a good relationship between the upper and lower class society. It can be seen the Laurences as the rich is a good upper class family member. Laure's is very helpful for March family, he always help for March sister. Another relationship, *Little women* also describe the relationship between March family and Hummel family.

b. Economic Aspect

The economic aspect of the United States changes in America during the nineteenth century has developed by the invention of engine. After the Civil War the economic condition grew up from the urban to the growing urban area which was more industrialized.

The United States remained a largely agricultural nation until late in the 19th century. Unskilled workers fared poorly in the early U.S. economy, receiving as little as half the pay of skilled craftsmen, artisans, and mechanics. About 40 percent of the workers in the cities were low-wage laborers and seamstresses in clothing factories, often

living in dismal circumstances. With the rise of factories, children, women, and poor immigrants were commonly employed to run machines

(http://economics.about.com/od/laborinamerica/a/labor_history.htm).

In *Little Women* displays the economic condition of the March family. Their economic condition is getting poorer, when they do not have father is going to Washington. The March family fell into poverty, they got difficulty in financial. It can be seen when Marmee got a telegraph and has gone to Blank hospital. The March family didn't have enough money to finance the trip. Jo as the only tomboyish daughter, she feels so sad and she tried hard to get the money. Finally she selling her one beauty her long hair to get money.

“.....Jo drew the table before her mother, well knowing that money for the long, sad journey must be borrowed, and feeling as if she could do anything to add to a little to the sum for her father.”(LW: 284)

c. Political Aspect

In the United States from 1820 to 1860 each “party system”. American was known to have two big parties in the nineteenth century. They are Republican Party and The Democratic Party.

Two major parties of the 1850s continued to dominate American politics after the Civil War. They are the same parties still in existence today, but their issues, beliefs and supporters have changed many times. After the Civil War, the major parties were tightly organized.

In *Little Women* novel, Alcott shows the condition in her novel. She describe of the effect of Civil War when the March Family

left by their man. Alcott shows her hateful feeling to the War so much because the family life without their man especially father. Below is the example of Alcott's expression in showing her badful :

“We’ve got Father and Mother, and each other,” said Beth contentedly from her corner.” (LW: 2)
“The four young faces on which the firelight shone brightened at the cheerful words, but darkened again as Jo said sadly, ‘We haven’t got Father, and shall not have him for a long time.’ She didn’t say ‘perhaps never,’ but each silently added it, thinking of Father far away, where the fighting was.” (LW: 2)

d. Cultural Aspect

In the second half nineteenth century of the United states have some culture. Culture is the members of society, example of culture like art, values, fact of culture, and normative. Alcott shows a kind of song in Little Women as the culture value. It can be seen when the March sister play an Operatic Tragedy on Christmas night by a soft strain of music sounded.

In the culture aspect divided into three dimension. The first Mental Fact, Mental fact consist into two aspect there are moral and value. The second Social Fact, is a social fact are the values, cultural norms. The members of social fact are material and non material. The third Physical Fact, is physical situation of the country, for example, economic, art, fashion, and architecture.

Alcott shows us another culture aspect in *Little Women* novel. The other culture aspect that Alcott shows about the act. Related to this, Alcott describes about the girl's manner. The problem is about a contrast view between Jo and Meg. Jo is tomboyish girl that like to act

as a boy's manner, while Meg is merely elegance girl that like to act in girly manner.

e. Religious Aspect

Religious aspect in the United States is different think about slavery between the North and the South. Instead, religious diversity and variety characterized their lives in the antebellum South. The move to Christianity occurred after the war. If Fountain is right, then scholars of American religion and African American history have much new terrain to survey.

The condition of America was influences the church activity and the missionary in keeping the Christianity. In the United States religions in nineteenth century have two major of religions, they are Protestant and Roman Catholic. It expressing by the keeping christianity, Alcott shows the activity of the chistianity when the merry christmas.

Alcott in Little Women exposes the religious condition of the March family. Marmee as the single parent is a person very strong and she always teaches the four girls religion value comprise to be cheerful in they life. Alcott succesfully describes the religious aspect in this novel, from the chapter one with the beginning of the christianity can be see the christmas. The since chapter of the novel comprise lesson of they life for March family.

f. Science and Technology Aspect

Science and technology in the era of the Civil War as an important tool for the stading the economic and social development of

the country. Technology in the era is very important to getting some information.

Science and technology make available the people the knowledge and getting information to understand all of challenges. Alcott portrays the technology condition based on of the era of the Civil War. One of the technology to used in the era is Telegraph to communicate with each others.

Telegraph is very important in era of the Civil War especially to March family. They used the telegraph to get message when Mr.March in Washington is fell a sick. After Marmee got the telegraph from Washington, she asked Laure help to send back a telegraph to Washington. So telegraph is very important because March family can getting message and send ba In the era of Civil War, station is the transportation for the Mrs.March. Little Women shows Marmee will come at once took a train in responding the telegraph, Marmee goes early in the morning.

“Send a telegram saying I will come at once. The next train goes early in the morning. I’ll take that.” (LW: 283)

Alcott describes about the development of science and technology in Little Women novel. She shows some of the science and technology in the era of Civil War. She shows the telegraph to get a message and send back a message and she shows the train for the transportation to Mrs.March to take in Washington.ck a message.

2. Conclusion and Suggestion

Based on the analysis in previous chapter, the researcher would like to draw some conclusion. The conclusion are the structural element and

sociological analysis. Firstly, based on the structural analysis it is clear that through this novel Louisa May Alcott wants to describe is a simple life is a good life. Alcott applies the characteristic of the novel because the story is about of real life in families. Alcott explains the character and characterization of the novel, there are five major characters and eight minor characters. Alcott also applies the setting of place in Washington, this is place of Alcott's live. In Little Women novel, Alcott shows the traditional plot in order to make the reader to be understood. It begins divided into exposition followed by the conflict and climax and the finally by the resolution of the story. Little Women novel is one of the novel very interesting and have good relation between all of part.

Secondly, based on the sociological analysis, Louisa May Alcott's Little Women reflects the social condition in the era of Civil War. Alcott shows the problem of March family when their left by the man. In condition, father figure is very important as the man in family because as the man who gets money for the family life to makes they life happily. Alcott also describes the economic aspect in American society at the second half of nineteenth century, when the economic condition of March family is getting worse and get the financial difficulties. Alcott through Little Women novel wants to criticized the political condition that the effects of Civil War makes the family life is getting poverty.

The researcher give the suggest to the readers to interested in conducting literary studies of Little Women. For example, they can analyze this novel by using feminism, marxism, and the other theory to analyze this novel.

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